

South Side Climbing Conditions – [June 18, 2015]

June's warm temps and relentless sun have been causing plenty of icefall and rockfall on the steep pitches of Mt. Hood. Please be cautious as the warm temps have also caused the upper mountain to deteriorate and it resembles July, not June. Climbers are still making their way to the summit, and most have been headed to the Old Chute as the Bergshrund has yawned quite wide and lots of icefall and rockfall have been occurring in the Pearly Gates. Evidence of icefall exists at the bottom of most steep pitches. The high temps have also brought out the Bergshrund at the top of the Hogsback to give climbers headed towards the Pearly Gates a bit tougher time. Remember to be respectful of each other on the busy, steeper and narrower sections of the climb.

The re-alignment of the Hogsback is resulting in a steep traverse up and through the Pearly Gates. The Old Chute route is more exposed than the Pearly Gates once on the summit ridge. From the top of the Old Chute, be careful traversing this ridge towards the true summit; there is a dangerous narrow section of the ridge. One side of the ridge there is a 2,000 foot drop onto the north side of the mountain, to the other side is a 150 foot drop. Be extra cautious of icefall and rockfall if you plan on being in or around the summit in the middle part of the day. Also be aware of possible cornice formation on the summit. Do not get near the edge of a cornice as it may break away at any time and break further back than you might expect.

Mt. Hood is both a very underrated and overrated mountain at the same time. Have a healthy respect for it and enjoy.

When you leave either parking area, please use the Climber's Trail just east of the ski area to avoid resort operations.

As always, visibility above tree line can go from good to bad quickly, making navigation difficult. Use caution and be aware of the rapidly changing weather if you choose to climb this weekend or into next week.

Please check the NOAA weather service and the Northwest Avalanche Center for up to date snow and weather conditions expected on Mt. Hood. Also, web sites exist that contain anecdotal trip reports that may or may not prove helpful.

Spring conditions can be dangerous and unpredictable. Storms, avalanche hazard, and high winds can happen at any time and may make climbing conditions dangerous and potential search and rescue even more dangerous. Those planning to climb should take all necessary equipment for self rescue and sustained and unwelcome bivy's on the mountain if it becomes necessary to wait out a storm. Avalanche rescue gear such as beacon, shovel, and probe is also strongly recommended. Mountain locator units are available for rent at REI and Mt. Hood Inn. Personal locator beacons, like a SPOT device, are also an option. Cell phones are a good idea but be advised they may not work in

many locations. All climbers are required to pack out human waste. Blue bags are available at the climbers register in the Wyeast Day Lodge. Please adhere to a Leave No Trace ethic while on the mountain so climbers after you may enjoy their experience.

Short term weather conditions:

See NOAA Mt. Hood forecast:

- a) go to - <http://forecast.weather.gov>
- b) type-in zip code 97028
- c) click on the top of Mt. Hood on the map for a local Forecast. Note the elevation of the forecast you are reading!
- d) click "Zone Forecast for Northern Oregon Cascades" for a regional forecast

Short term weather and avalanche conditions:

See [Northwest Weather and Avalanche Center](http://www.nwac.us/) <http://www.nwac.us/>

Disclaimer:

Conditions on the mountain change rapidly. This report does not point out all hazards. Don't expect that what is described here is what you will find. These reports are from competent climbers who are sharing their observations at one point in time. You need to be evaluating conditions and weather throughout your climb.